

REMARKS

Please cancel Claims 8, 18, 28 and 36. New Claim 38 is added herein. Claims 1-7, 9-17, 19-27, 29-35 and 37-38 are pending. Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 are amended herein. No new matter is added as a result of the claim amendments.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-14, 17, 19-24, 27, 29-33, 35 and 37

The instant Office Action states that Claims 1-4, 7, 9-14, 17, 19-24, 27, 29-33, 35 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Microsoft ("MS") and Choy et al. ("Choy;" U.S. Patent No. 5,506,952).

Applicants respectfully submit that MS does not show or suggest "wherein said first and second portions of active elements are displayed in an order corresponding to said logical order so that said active elements are presented to said user to guide said user through said tasks in said logical order" as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 (emphasis added). This point is implicitly acknowledged on page 3 of the Office Action, which states that "MS does not teach said tasks are to be performed in a logical order and wherein said second portion is selectively activated to guide said user through said tasks according to said logical order."

Applicants respectfully submit that Choy does not overcome the shortcomings of MS. A key distinction between Choy and the present claimed invention is that Choy only pertains to the construction of system rules, developed by moving selected icons from palette 35 into a rule construction

area 34. That is, Choy discloses a rule authoring interface, by which a user may order computer-implemented tasks according to the user's needs. In contrast to Choy, the present claimed invention is for enforcing a particular order for performing tasks by guiding a user through those tasks by selectively activating and deactivating particular graphic elements. In plain terms, Choy describes how a user can guide a computer to perform tasks, while the present claimed invention describes just the opposite -- namely, how a computer can guide a user to perform tasks. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Choy (even in combination with MS) does not show or suggest the present claimed invention.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that "active" and "inactive," with regard to the states of a graphic element, are defined in the claims. That is, an element that is active initiates an action (in response to being selected by a user) while an element that is inactive does not initiate an action (in response to being selected by a user). With that claimed definition in mind, Applicants respectfully submit that Choy does not show or suggest active graphic elements displayed in an order that corresponds to an order in which tasks are to be performed so that the active elements are presented to a user in order to guide the user through the tasks in order.

That is, Applicants respectfully submit that Choy does not provide a user interface that guides a user. The icons in the palette 35 of Choy are not displayed in an order intended to guide a user, nor are the icons of a task rule 40 of Choy arranged to guide a user. Furthermore, the icons in Choy's task rule 40 are not active according to the claimed definition of active.

Also, with the claimed definitions of active and inactive in mind, Applicants respectfully submit that the icons in the palette 35 of Choy are neither active nor inactive. Choy only describes making icons less visible or more visible (e.g., they are grayed out or not). According to Choy, there is no relationship between the visibility of an icon and whether or not the icon is active or inactive.

Moreover, Choy only describes icons that can be dragged or not dragged. "Selecting" according to Choy only constitutes dragging an icon from one location in a display to another. Selecting one of Choy's icons does not result in an action being initiated. Selecting one of Choy's icons does not result in activation of another icon. Although Choy uses the word "icon," Applicants respectfully submit that the icons of Choy cannot be equated with the graphic elements of the present claimed invention.

For any or all of the reasons above, Applicants respectfully submit that Choy (alone or in combination with MS) does not show or suggest "wherein said first and second portions of active elements are displayed in an order corresponding to said logical order so that said active elements are presented to said user to guide said user through said tasks in said logical order" as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and are in condition for allowance. As such, Applicants also respectfully submit

that Claims 2-4, 7, 9-10, 12-14, 17, 19-20, 22-24, 27, 29-30, 32-33, 35 and 37 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35

The instant Office Action states that Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MS, Choy and Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 are dependent on independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 and recite additional limitations. As presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that MS and Choy do not show or suggest the present invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31. Applicants also respectfully submit that AAPA does not overcome the shortcomings of MS and Choy.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that AAPA, alone or in combination with MS and Choy, does not show or suggest "wherein said first and second portions of active elements are displayed in an order corresponding to said logical order so that said active elements are presented to said user to guide said user through said tasks in said logical order" as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that MS, Choy and AAPA, alone or in combination, do not show or suggest the present claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31. As such, Applicants also

respectfully submit that Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

Conclusions

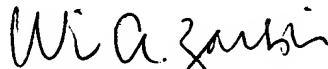
In light of the above remarks, reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Based on the arguments presented above, it is respectfully asserted that Claims 1-7, 9-17, 19-27, 29-35 and 37, as well as new Claim 38, overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, allowance of these claims is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 10/6/05